



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Tuesday, October 20, 2020 –4:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Joanne Semanie
Absent: Selectman Ed Silva
Administrative Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III, Administrative Assistant
Other Attendees: Board of Health Chair Margaret Rice
Audience of Citizens: Ben Werner, Director of Rowe Camp and Conference Center

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M., a quorum of the board present via remote participation.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Silva: **absent**

Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

Background: This group of individuals (self-titled "Covid Group") has been meeting weekly for the past few months to listen to the state Covid-19 briefings and discuss ongoing matters in town related to the pandemic. As Board of Health Clerk Joanne Semanie was elected last Saturday to the Board of Selectmen, there is now a quorum of the board present during these weekly meetings, and as such, must take place in open session.

Covid Discussion: The following points/topics were addressed during discussion:

Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice provided the following updates:

- There was a Covid-19 Survey on the Mass.gov website that people were encouraged to take to see if adequate services were reaching our area.
- There will be a Covid-19 vaccine that will be available in stages and will target the most vulnerable to start and the remainder administered at clinics.
- There was discussion about the Holidays and the risks involved
- The Nurse position candidate looked promising and discussion will take place at next meeting
- There was discussion about people refusing to wear masks at the Refuse Gardens

Trick or Treat Tailgate was discussed and Selectmen agreed that it was the purview of the Board of Health to make a final decision. Chair Rice said that it seems unlikely it could take place safely, given the protocols necessary.

The following message was prepared for the Public Notification System:

"The following is the weekly message regarding the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. This message will focus on the upcoming special town meeting this Saturday, October 24th, and the general election on November 3rd, followed by an update regarding the current community-level risk of COVID-19 in Rowe.

The Special Town Meeting will be occurring Saturday, October 24th at Noon at the Rowe Fire Station. Weather permitting, this meeting will be held outdoors, so plan to bring the appropriate outdoor apparel.

Cloth face coverings will be required of anyone attending the Special Town Meeting, and there will be a limited supply of masks for those who do not have their own. While at the meeting, please remember to maintain at least 6 feet of distance between you and anyone else. You may sit or stand in a group with people from your own household, provided the entire household maintains the required distance from other groups.

Please be willing to follow instructions and signage regarding any other guidance or requirements at the Special Town Meeting. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we all do our best to keep each other safe while maintaining the opportunity for full civic engagement.

The option to vote in the general election via absentee ballot, which presents fewer potential exposure risks than voting in person, is available for anyone who would rather vote by mail than come in-person to vote. Voting via this method is safe and secure, and those votes will be counted along with and via the same process as all in-person ballots cast on election day. Absentee ballots applications are available in a folder at the entrance of the town hall. Alternately, ballot applications can be obtained on the town website at Rowe-ma.gov or by contacting the Rowe Town Clerk at 413-339-5520 ext. 14, or via email at townclerk@rowe-ma.gov

If you are not already registered to vote, the deadline for registration for the general election is this coming Saturday, October 24th.

The State of Massachusetts is maintaining data for community-level COVID-19 risk. Currently, the Town of Rowe is rated as a low-risk community due to our low incidence of infection and transmission, despite the increase of transmission state-wide. This is a product of our collective efforts to maintain social distancing and to wear masks while in public. As a reminder, it is these cloth face coverings, along with diligent hand washing and maintaining 6-foot distancing, that have allowed us to reduce the incidence of Coronavirus transmission as much as we have. Relaxing these practices may lead to greater virus transmission locally.

The Rowe Coronavirus task force continues to meet regularly and is staying informed about the current state of the Coronavirus pandemic and the effect of the pandemic on the Town of Rowe.

We will continue to keep you updated on these and other coronavirus topics on an on-going basis, typically with weekly updates or when prudent.
Thank you, and stay healthy”

Adjournment:

MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:36 p.m. The motion was seconded by Selectman Semanie.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Silva: **absent**

Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

Respectfully Submitted,


Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: *OCTOBER 27, 2020*

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Selectman Joanne Semanie

Documents:

- Agenda October 20, 2020